




USAID | BENIN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TO: All qualified Applicants

FROM: Catherine Andang, A/ Mission Director 

Subject: Job Opportunity Announcement

USAID is accepting applications for the following local-hire position:

POSITION TITLE : Administrative Assistant

NUMBER OF POSITIONS : One (1)

GRADE : FSN 07 (Cooperating Country National)

OPENING DATE : November 5, 2007

CLOSING DATE : November 21, 2007

WORK HOURS : Full-time; 40 hours/week

USAID/Benin is an equal opportunity organization. We encourage full participation of all qualified and interested person. Persons with disabilities will be assisted and receive reasonable accommodation.

1. BASIC FUNCTIONS OF POSITION

This position is located in the Basic Education Team (BET) of USAID/Benin. The BET mission is to improve the quality of and access to basic education in primary schools. Specific priority areas include support for the primary education reform, teacher training, and textbook development, increasing girls' education and enhancing community participation in school management. There is also a focus on improved awareness among teachers and students about HIV/AIDS prevention. The Mission's Basic Education Strategic Objective is valued at approximately \$17 million, and though the BET program currently consists of one major activity, in the next year, two additional activities will be added, with one being focused on girls' education and community participation, and the other to continue USAID support of the basic education system.

The primary purpose of this position is to serve as the Administrative Assistant within the Basic Education Team. S/he reports directly to the BET Leader. The Administrative Assistant will provide a variety of services including administrative support, program support, information management, and communications services to BET. S/he is responsible for routine BET administrative operations, and oversight of logistical services provided to the Team, as well as other duties as assigned.

2. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Administrative support:

40% of time

- Manages all BET office correspondence. Receives, reviews and controls all incoming and outgoing correspondence and communications in close coordination with the Correspondence and Records Office (C&R). Routes correspondence to supervisor or appropriate staff member, including information copies as required. Tracks documents which have been sent to other Offices and follows up when these appear to be in danger of delinquency. Keeps track of all actions forwarded to the Team and advises the relevant team member of assigned action. Prepares a delinquent action list for the supervisor on a weekly basis or more frequently as requested. Records and tracks other pending actions and informs supervisor and other staff regularly as to status. Makes photocopies as required.
- Prepares routine MAARDs and vouchers for the Team Leader and Activity Managers;
- Sets up and maintains BET office filing system in accordance with AID HB 21 or the ADS. Ensures the integrity of the files by keeping originals and providing copies to the Project Managers for their working files. Works with C&R on disposition of files and records to the Warehouse on a periodic basis as prescribed by the HB.
- Makes appointments and travel arrangements; prepares and secures clearances and signatures for documents, cables, and travel vouchers, etc. for traveling team members.
- Serves as a timekeeper for BET staff. Keeps time and attendance records and submits biweekly time and attendance worksheets to employees and their supervisors for approval and onward transmission.
- Provides logistical support services for all visitors who come under BET control. As necessary, prepares all paperwork to ensure that visitors receive security briefing, have access to the USAID network, are assigned a workspace and if required, arrange for hotel reservations, airport expedition, and transportation arrangements. Provides long term TDYers with a welcome packet.
- Manages equipment and office supplies of BET. Requests equipment maintenance and supplies through the use of an automated work order system. Requests office equipment, supplies, and services. Maintains an office stock of supplies and tracks their usage to ensure adequate supplies are used properly and readily available.

B. Program Support:

40 % of time

- Receives visitors and phone calls requesting information about the USAID education program. Answers questions or provides information within her capability or refers callers to the supervisor, one of the staff or to another Office or Team. As directed or in response to incoming requests, arranges appointments and conferences with Mission and Government of Benin (GOB) officials, Embassy and other U.S. Government officials, officials of other donor agencies, contractors and others. Reminds supervisor and staff of appointments.
- Arranges meetings and conferences as requested. Makes all logistical and document preparations for meetings and conferences, including logistical preparations such as coffee breaks, and meeting materials. Types agendas, notifies participants (within the Mission by e-mail and others by fax) and follows up to confirm attendance. Attends meetings to take notes and prepares minutes to include agreements reached, and tasks assigned.
- Prepares program related documentation in final form and routes through the Mission for clearance and signature. Prepares reports, tables and spreadsheets, faxes and other documents in draft and final form for the Team Leader and other BET staff. Ensures that all are in proper form, consistent with standard requirements. Ensures that format, spelling, grammar, punctuation and phraseology of

completed work are correct. This includes program documents such as Strategic Objective agreements, Action Memos, Implementation Letters. At times, hand carries urgent documents or correspondence to the Ministry for clearances. Locates, obtains and tracks appropriate clearances and signatures. Maintains the sequential numbering system for Implementation letters.

- Translates documents including but not limited to Program and Project Agreements, Implementation Letters and official correspondence, from English to French or vice versa. Prepares finalized documents in required formats.
- Conducts routine Internet website searches for information for BET programming, and/or activity management (ADS or other USAID or State regulations for example) as requested by the Team members.
- Assists BET to manage unsolicited funding requests. This includes maintaining a system for logging in letters received, drafting routine negative responses and filing the completed correspondence file.

C. Information Management:

20% of time

- Establishes and maintains the official files for BET (e.g. Agreements, Correspondence, Program Documents, Contractor Deliverables, Administrative Documents). Works under supervision of the Team Leader to ensure that files are maintained in compliance with USAID requirements.
- Utilizes automated document management tools to electronically categorize, store, and retrieve official documents. Ensures hardcopies of official documents are properly filed, controlled, and retired.
- Serves as BET point of contact for searching, retrieving, and distributing copies of official program files. This includes ensuring that official files which are widely used as references are scanned and made available electronically to all Cotonou users.

3. OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

A. Supervision Received

The Administrative Assistant is supervised by the BET Leader, who provides instructions on an as-needed basis and reviews finished work for compliance with policy and procedures. The Administrative Assistant is responsible for carrying out day to day functions with minimal supervision. S/he also receives assignments from the Development Assistance Specialist. Performance evaluations include input from other members of Mission staff. The Administrative Assistant is rated according to level and quality of support provided. Guidance from supervisor is increasingly less specific in nature as s/he develops job expertise.

B. Available Guidelines

Automated Directives System (ADS), handbooks, Mission Orders, Mission Notices, USAID Strategy documents

C. Exercise of Judgment

The Administrative Assistant is required to exercise judgment and discretion in establishing work priorities, and communicating with USAID staff, partners and the Government of Benin (GOB) counterparts. Must have strong interpersonal skills.

D. Authority to Make Commitments

Has authority to direct all incoming and outgoing communications to proper action officer. Recognizes level of response required and takes action when appropriate. The Administrative Assistant does not have the authority to make a financial or programmatic commitment on behalf of the U.S. government.

E. Nature, Level and Purpose of Contacts

The Administrative Assistant coordinates with Embassy officials, personnel of other Offices and Teams in USAID/Benin, to get information, to make arrangements, to organize events, respond to inquiries, to handle documents. Contacts are with working level counterparts in GOB ministries, particularly the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, other donors and partners to exchange information. S/he provides non-technical information about the USAID program to partners, and members of the public. Provides information about BET programs and procedures to Mission staff, and partners orally and in writing.

F. Supervision Exercised

This is a non-supervisory position.

H. Time Required to Master Full Range of Duties

Twelve months.

4. QUALIFICATIONS AND EVALUATION FACTORS:

Applicants must submit a curriculum vitae (CV) which contains information about education, professional experience and skills. CV's must include a discussion of skills in language and computers. Applicants are encouraged to prepare a cover letter which provides more details which show how other skills for this position were demonstrated in previous professional experience. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to submit copies of the application in both French and English.

Applications must include the names and contact information for at least three references. USAID will contact current employers for references. Candidates who do not wish to have current employers contacted must state this in their application.

After an initial review of applications, only those deemed to meet minimum requirements will receive further consideration. After reviewing applications from the initial screening, the USAID committee will develop a short-list of applicants who will be invited for testing and interviews.

Following are the evaluation criteria, with their weight of importance.

A. Education: (20%)

Initial screening is Yes/No scoring. An applicant will not be considered if s/he does not meet the minimum requirements.

Completion of a high school education is a minimum requirement. Completion of college or university studies in a social program or completion of a post secondary secretarial program such as a BTS Bilingual secretarial program is highly desirable. Having at least three years of equivalent professional experience in a senior administrative support position can be substituted for the post-secondary education requirement.

B. Language Proficiency: (20%)

Initial screening will entail an examination of the application package to see evidence of language proficiency in English and French at the requisite level. Applicants who do not include a discussion of

language proficiency in the application will not receive further consideration.

Fluency in French for both written and spoken is required. A good working knowledge of English both written and spoken is also required. Screening will include an oral interview and a written test to assess ability to read and write in both English and French at the levels required for the position.

C. Experience (35%)

Initial screening is Yes/No scoring. An applicant will not be considered if s/he does not meet the minimum requirements.

Three to five years of progressively responsible administrative support and related experience is required. At least two years should have been in a senior secretarial or program support position in a corporate, local or international organization.

Previous experience must demonstrate ability to achieve full proficiency in this position. This will require that the Administrative Assistant acquires a thorough understanding of USAID records management, programming, travel, administrative and program document preparation, and program and administrative policies and procedures.

D. Other Skills and Abilities: (25%)

Minimum requirements for this position include the ability to use computers effectively. This includes proficiency in word processing and basic skills in using spreadsheets. Knowledge of software programs used by USAID is preferred. These include Word, Excel, Outlook and the Internet.

Applicants invited for interviews will be tested for skills in using Word and Excel. Interpersonal, teamwork and customer service skills of the applicants invited for an interview will be assessed through answers to hypothetical questions asked during interviews and through the information provided by references.

Skills in multitasking, attention to detail, and time management along with degree of motivation will be assessed during interviews and through information provided by references.

Ability to exercise independent judgment will also be assessed in interviews and through information provided by references.